

BOOKBINDING by European workmen with the best material and under European supervision at THE DAILY PRESS' OFFICE Always pronounced equal to home work, and prices very moderate.

NOTING OF ALL KINDS at the "DAILY PRESS" OFFICE. All are read and all work superintended by Englishmen. Always equal and generally superior to that done anywhere else. Estimates given.

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P.O. Box 29. Telephone No. 12.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

NOTICE.

MR. FRANCIS MAITLAND is admitted a partner in our Firm from the 1st April, 1899.

LINSTEAD & DAVIS, Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [923]

NOTICE.

WE have this Day admitted Mr. EDWARD SHELLIMAN a partner in our Firm in Hongkong.

Mr. A. HOWARD has been authorized to sign for the Firm in Hongkong from this date.

DAVID SASSOON, SONS & CO., Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [927]

FOR THE MAIL.

THE HONGKONG WEEKLY PRESS will be ready to receive and will contain:

Leading Articles—The British and Russian Spheres. Partition or Reform. Railways in Yunnan. Dr. Dohere and the Manila Storm. Warnings. Cremation.

Supreme Court. Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce. Rivers. The War in the Philippines.

The Charge against an Artilleryman. Special Meeting of the Sanitary Board. Mr. Granville Sharp on Cremation. The Scotch Concerto. Hongkong Volunteer Corps.

The British Field Competition. Great Eastern and Colombo Gold Min-

ing Co. Limited. Shanghai and Hongkong Wharf Co. Ltd. Progress at Kiao-nan. French Activity in Yunnan. Hongkong Rifle Association. Royal Hongkong Yacht Club.

Correspondence. Local and District Intelligence.

Subscriptions \$12 per annum payable in advance, postage \$2. Extra copies 30 cents each. Cash.

Copies can be posted from the Office to addresses sent; including postage 34 cents each, or \$14 for three copies Cash.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899.

CHINA NAVIGATION COMPANY, LIMITED.

FOR SHANGHAI.

THE Company's Steamship "KASHING" will be despatched as above TO-MORROW, the 1st April.

For Freight or Passages apply to BUTTERFIELD & SWINEY, Agents.

Hongkong, 30th March, 1899. [924]

DOUGLAS STEAMSHIP COMPANY, LIMITED.

FOOCHOW.

THE Company's Steamship "THALAS" will be despatched for the above ports on SUNDAY, the 2nd April, at DAYLIGHT.

For Freight or Passages apply to DOUGLAS LIAO & CO., General Managers.

Hongkong, 30th March, 1899. [925]

NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD.

NOTICE.

STEAM TO YOKOHAMA, KOBE, AND NAGASAKI.

(Passing through the INLAND SEA.)

THE Company's Steamship "HOHENZOLERN" will leave for the above ports on or about WEDNESDAY, the 5th April.

For further Particulars, apply to MELCHERS & CO., Agents.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [926]

NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD.

NOTICE.

STEAM TO SHANGHAI.

THE Company's Steamship "PRINZ HEINRICH" will leave for the outward German mail about the 4th April, will leave for the above ports about 45 hours after arrival.

For further Particulars, apply to MELCHERS & CO., Agents.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [927]

NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES.

THE P. & O. N. Co.'s Steamer "MAZAGAN" from BOOM and STRAITS.

Consignees of Cargo, hereby informed that their goods are being landed and placed at their ship in the Hongkong and Kowloon Wharf and Godown Company's Godown at Kowloon, where each consignment will be sorted out by mark, and delivery can be obtained as soon as the goods are landed.

The vessel brings on board—

Goods not cleared by the 5th April, at 4 p.m. will be subject to rate.

No Fire Insurance will be effected by me in any case whatever.

All damaged packages must be left in the Godowns and a certificate of the damage obtained from the Godown Company within ten days after the vessel's arrival here, after which no claims will be recognized.

H. A. RITCHIE, Superintendent.

Hongkong, 30th March, 1899. [928]

CHINESE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT 7 PER CENT SILVER LOAN OF 1888.

25th HALF-YEARLY DRAWING.

INTEREST due and Drawn Bonds of this Loan will be PAYABLE at the Offices of the CORPORATION on and after the 30th March, 1899.

Lists of Drawn Bonds can be obtained on application to the Undersigned.

For THE HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION, Agents issuing the Loan.

T. JACKSON, Chief Manager.

1899.

UNITED ASBESTOS ORIENTAL AGENCY (LIMITED).

SOLE AGENTS IN HONGKONG, CHINA, JAPAN, AND THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

UNITED ASBESTOS COMPANY, LTD., LONDON.

CONTRACTORS TO H. M. GOVERNMENT.

MANUFACTURERS OF THE

HYDRAULIC AND SELF-LUBRICATING PUMPS, PACKINGS, of all kinds.

METALLIC BOILER JOINTS.

ASBESTOS SALVAGER & BOILER COVERING COMPOSITION.

ESTIMATES GIVEN FOR EVERY DESCRIPTION OF WORK.

Superintendent.

DODWELL & CO., LIMITED, General Agents.

Hongkong, 16th March, 1899. [929]

Hongkong Daily Press.

ESTABLISHED 1857.

NO. 12,518 號八百一十八年十二月二日星期五 HONGKONG, FRIDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1899.

五

號一十三年九十九百八千零三十一

PRICES \$2 1/2 PER MONTH.

ENTERTAINMENTS

THEATRE ROYAL.

Messrs. DALLAS AND MUSGRAVE'S

DRAMATIC COMPANY

SATURDAY, April 1st, Grand production

of the Great Adelphi Nautical Drama,

"THE HARBOUR LIGHTS."

PRICES—\$3, \$2, and \$1.

PLAN at ROBINSON PIANO CO.

Soldiers and Sailors (in uniform) half price to back seats only.

W. H. BROWN, Business Manager.

Hongkong, 30th March, 1899. [930]

ONLY FOR A SHORT SEASON.

FIRST TIME IN HONGKONG. BEST AMUSEMENT FOR FAMILIES.

SIMON'S GRAND MUSEUM AND WAX WORKS EXHIBITION, OPPOSITE HONGKONG HOTEL.

A Grand, Marvelous, Magnificent, and Extraordinary Show, which has never been seen before in Hongkong.

ALL LIFE-SIZED MOVING WAX FIGURES

Made by the most clever and best artists of Europe.

Price of Admission 50 cents. Sailors and Soldiers in Uniform, Half Price. Children Under 15, 25 cents. Reduction in price made to Schools.

Open Every Day from 8 A.M. to 11 P.M. Except SUNDAYS.

PROFESSOR A. W. SIMONS, Proprietor.

Don't Lose this Opportunity.

Hongkong, 25th March, 1899. [931]

NOTICE.

CHINA TRADERS' INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE Office of the Company will be REMOVED to QUEEN'S BUILDINGS, PRATA.

W. H. RAY, Secretary.

Hongkong, 27th March, 1899. [932]

NOTICE.

HONGKONG AND WHAMPOA DOCK COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE Day has been REMOVED to the Building on the New PRATA, N.E. Corner, 3rd Floor.

D. GILLIES, Chief Manager.

Hongkong, 27th March, 1899. [932]

BANK HOLIDAYS.

IN Accordance with Ordinance No. 6 of 1875, the Undermentioned Banks will be CLOSED for the Transaction of Public Business on the following Days:—

WEDNESDAY, 1st April, (GOOD FRIDAY).

THURSDAY, 2nd April, (EASTER DAY).

FRIDAY, 3rd April, (EASTER MONDAY).

For the CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA, AUSTRALIA AND CHINA.

T. H. WHITEHEAD, Manager, Hongkong.

For the HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION.

T. JACKSON, Chief Manager.

For the NATIONAL BANK OF CHINA, LIMITED.

GEO. W. E. PLAYFAIR, Chief Manager.

Hongkong, 19th September, 1898. [933]

NOTICE.

HONGKONG AND WHAMPOA DOCK COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE Day has been REMOVED to the Building on the New PRATA, N.E. Corner, 3rd Floor.

D. GILLIES, Chief Manager.

Hongkong, 27th March, 1899. [934]

NOTICE.

INSURANCE HOLIDAYS.

THE Undermentioned Insurance Offices will be CLOSED for the Transaction of Public Business on the following Days:—

SATURDAY, 1st April, (GOOD FRIDAY).

SUNDAY, 2nd April, (EASTER DAY).

MONDAY, 3rd April, (EASTER MONDAY).

For further Particulars, apply to

MELCHERS & CO., Agents.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [935]

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Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. [936]

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Hongkong and Kowloon Wharf and Godown

Company's Godown at Kowloon, where each

consignment will be sorted out by mark,

and delivery can be obtained as soon as the

goods are landed.

The vessel brings on board—

Goods not cleared by the 5th April, at

4 p.m. will be subject to rate.

No Fire Insurance will be effected by me in

any case whatever.

INTIMATIONS
EYE-SIGHT.

NOTICE.

M. N. LAZARUS
OCULIST OPTICIAN
MAY BE CONSULTED FOR

SPECTACLES

ONLY UNTIL

SATURDAY next, April 1st.

Mr. Lazarus supplies his Spectacles only after TESTING the sight.

FLETCHER'S PHARMACY,

Opposite the HONGKONG HOTEL.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. (735)

THE EQUITABLE

LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY OF THE
UNITED STATESIt is permitted by the authority of the Manager of the
Daily Press to present to readers the
THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT for the
year ending December 31st, 1898.

ASSETS \$35,826,337

LIABILITIES to Policy
HOLDERS and OTHERS 41,887,352

SURPLUS \$1,939,635

SURPLUS means SECURITY, and in this
respect the EQUITABLE is what it claims
to be.THE STRONGEST COMPANY IN
THE WORLD.

Hongkong, 31st March, 1899. (525)

A. S. WATSON & CO.,
LIMITED.

WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS.

ESTABLISHED A.D. 1841.

SCOTCH WHISKY.

Per Case
1 doz.A—THORNE'S BLEND, White
Capsule \$10.80B—WATSON'S GLENORCHY
MELLOW BLEND, Blue
Capsule, with Name and
Trade Mark 10.80C—WATSON'S ABERLOUR-GLEN-
LIVELIE, Red Capsule, with
Name and Trade Mark 12.00D—WATSON'S H. K. D. BLEND
of the FINEST SCOTCH
MALT WHISKIES, Violet
Capsule 14.40E—WATSON'S VERY OLD LI-
QUEUR SCOTCH WHISKY,
Gold Capsule 15.00THORNE'S BLEND and WATSON'S
GLENORCHY are high class Soda
Whiskies, of greater age than most
brands in the market.ABELOUR GLENLIVET is a very old
Peat Whisky (smoky), and could not
now be replaced in stock at the price.

D is well known for its fine flavour.

E is of superb quality and pro-
nounced by leading local connoisseurs
to be the best brand in the Hongkong
market.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LIMITED.

WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS

Established 1841

MARRIAGE.

On the 29th March, at Christ Church, Wangkam,

New Zealand, by the Rev. T. B. Maclean, HON.

H. REEDON of Shanghai, to ELSA, daughter of

F. A. KRELL of Wangkam.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, March 31st, 1899

Owing to the Easter holidays there will be
no issue of the Daily Press to-morrow or on
Monday.The China Gazette translates from the
Universal Gazette's statement to the effect that the
Hupen Cloth Mill has borrowed 300,000 taels
from the Japanese Government to assist the
finances of the mill, and to enable an increase
to be made in the plant.The popular appreciation of the high character
of the performances of Messrs. Dallas and
Mugrave's Dramatic Company increases with
each appearance. Last night "The Sign of the
Cross" was played for the last time and to
the popular applause. Adelphi, nautical drama
"Harbour Lights" will be presented.The N. C. Daily News publishes the follow-
ing special notice:—Peking, 24th March.Special instructions, by command of the
Emperor Dowager, were sent yesterday and on
the 23rd instant to the Viceroys and Governors
of maritime provinces, to remit by force any
landing of foreign armed forces of men along
the coast and holding said officials responsible
for failure to obey.With today's Daily Press will be found
inserted our annual sheet the annual report of
the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the
United States to which we would direct our
readers' attention. The assets amount to
\$23,469,727, and the liability to policy-holders
and others to \$24,877,252, the surplus being
\$11,939,85. As remarked in the advertisement
surplus means security.The steamer *Tonami* and *Hermes*, which were
recently in collision, docked at Shanghai on the
25th March, the former going to *Boyd's Dock*. Both
vessels, the N. C. Daily News says, have
sustained greater damage than was at first
anticipated. The *Tonami* has a hole in her
side measuring roughly 90 ft. by 12 ft. and
will have to be laid up. In all 26 of the
vessels will need replacing. The *Hermes*, apart
from the huge rent in her starboard bow in
which a large section of the *Tonami's* side is
obviously striking, has, it is feared, her stern
broken. It is not, however, that both
vessels will have to be laid up in about
200 days.Travellers up country should always provide
themselves with *Liebig's* Company's *Extract*. It
takes up little space and can always be carried
in a pocket. It is a most nutritious and
convenient article of diet. It is also
a most nutritious and convenient article of diet.ALICE MEMORIAL AND NETHER-
SOUL HOSPITALSANNUAL MEETING OF THE FINANCE
COMMITTEE.The annual meeting of the Finance Committee
of the Alice Memorial and Nethersol Hospitals
was held at the Alice Memorial Hospital
yesterday afternoon, there being present the
Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart, C.M.G. (chair-
man), the Rev. T. W. Pearce, Mr. W. Murray
Bain, Mr. A. MacLachlan, Mr. Wong Shing
Dow, Dr. J. C. Thompson, Mr. G. G. G. (treas-
urer), and Mr. M. Gleeson (auditor), with
representatives and secretary.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

The first business was the election of chair-
man for the ensuing year.Mr. WILFRAY BAIN, in proposing the re-
election of Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart, said
they might go round among all the officials
in the colony and fail to find a man.Dr. GIBSON seconded, and the motion was
carried.THE CHAIRMAN, in returning thanks, testified
to the great help he had received from the
Finance Committee.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

The annual report and statement of accounts
were then submitted. The report was as
follows:—During the year there has been a large
number of out-patients, the number at Nethersol
Hospital being in excess of last year, while
that of Alice Hospital is rather less.The out-patients in the former consist of
women and children only, and it is encouraging
to know that we are gradually gaining the con-
fidence of Chinese women—a class most difficult
to reach. In this Hospital there is a
large ward for children, a female medical
and surgical ward, a eye ward, obstetrics ward
and a children's ward. The in-patients are on
the whole very grateful for the care they receive,
while many of the higher women greatly ap-
preciate the rest and comfort. One patient
was a Hukka woman who for ten years had
been thought hopelessly blind, but was ad-
mitted, operated on, and a sight was
restored. Another woman, a Chinese, was
recovered from tubercular bone disease,
which in the out-patient department we have
constantly to refuse admittance to cases of
tubercular lung disease; we earnestly hope
that in the near future some special hos-
pital may be erected in Hongkong for care of
such cases, many of whom could be cured by
timely treatment.Mrs. STEVENS, in her report, said that
many friends have sent other gifts
than our best thanks and wishes to
the hospital.The statement of account shows a balance
of \$1,200,000.43. At the annual meeting in
the year there was a balance of \$1,200,000.43
in hand. The donations received for the duration
of the year amounted to \$7,311.44, in addition to
which were special donations amounting to
\$36,150.Mr. MACKENZIE, in formally presenting the
treasurer's report, said that notwithstanding the
fact that they had a handsomely balanced
fund, they had a large amount of
outstanding debts, and that the
amount of these debts was \$1,270,540, which
was a very large sum.Dr. THOMSON, in proposing the adoption of
the report, said that the patients of the hospital
are very sickly, and that the amount of
outstanding debts is a serious consideration.The Chinese patients at the Alice Hospital
are men and women of many races: Chinese,
Japanese, Indians, Portuguese, with
occasional Europeans. The majority, however,
are Chinese of the coolie class, many of whom
suffer from diseases directly due to the severity
of their work. Their lives are trying, and we
are thankful that God has given us the
privilege of ministering to them.After addressing the Chinese patients, Dr. STEVENS
said that the out-patients at the Alice Hospital
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FOR SALE
BROADWOOD PIANOS
NEW MODELS
MONTHLY PAYMENTS.
LANE, CRAWFORD & CO. [1-78]

W. BREWER & CO.

NEW BOOKS AND NEW EDITIONS.

A Guide to Manila and the Philippines
with Spanish Vocabulary. 1.00
Year Book of Treatment, 1892. 4.50
Jinrikisha Days in Japan, by Scidmore. 4.50
Flash Lights on Nature, by Grant Allen. 1.50
Haydn's Dictionary of Dates—to date. 13.00
Spanish without a Master. 1.00
Read's New Guide Book and Key. 5.75
Strength by Sandow. 1.50
Curse by Whyte Melville
Katerfelds, by Ditts. 1.50
Unseen Hand, Lyzeh. 1.50
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C. MOONEY, Secretary.

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SPORT AND ANECDOTE.

By an Old Fogey.

MASTERS OF THE SITUATION.
In venturing recently to touch upon the subject of slow cricket in county matches I ventured to do so, short, very briefly, to what a large extent the minor officials that constitute the game. Returning to the topic last night it came a little more closely. That there is a good deal of truth in the contention of Mr. J. A. Dixon, the accomplished captain of the Notts eleven, will not be seriously disputed. When he says that the tactics of the present day boys are much more responsible for slow cricket than the tactics of batman, he no doubt has in mind the rapidly growing school of "theory" bowlers, the most popular with ball after half wide of the off stump, knowing at the time that it would be the veriest fluke were they to hit the stump. Some few of our first-class bowlers practise this to a large extent. When these "theory" young gentlemen have been exposed by "theory" batsmen the result is generally a rapid and hasty procession of maiden over. Then again what with the shrewd pitches of to-day, combined with the almost marvellous accuracy of the men in the field, the batsman who takes no risks may keep an off the mark the five long days without giving birth to a single thrill of excitement to the patient onlookers. I can enjoy smart, clean, crisp fielding as well as anyone. Your true cricket can make the day's work of slow bowlers like young Mr. Butt or Johnson, with genuine admiration: indeed, it is well for him to see them "tuck up" one of your careful methodical average grubbers, but it may be safely asserted that the crowd in bulk love to see sprightly batman, and if they cannot get this, they will come up from our County ground. Here it is that the real crowd comes in, and no trumper would be foolish enough to pretend to be independent of the skill and artfulness displayed at the turnstiles by the many-headed.

"AVERAGE GRUBBERS."

This is not a pleasant phrase by any means, it is not mine, but it does describe about as accurately as anything I know one of the most abysmal, if not of modern cricket. It is not so much the money or valueable money prizes were often used as the propensities of an enterprising weekly journal to get the best and the best, howling execrations made up at the end of each of the cricketing months. Up to the first of it, this seems inconceivable, but it did not take followers of the game very long to discover that the interests of more than one county were being sacrificed in the rush for the prizes. Professional cricketers as a rule have their share of shrewdness and shrewdness I am, correct in saying that when it was first known that the substantial money prizes were being offered by a select committee of cranks, it was more than justified the predictors. As I write I have in my mind an extraordinary run of "not out" innings played last summer by a well-known professional. For nine months his batting was the one topic of conversation — of cricketers, but there was more than a smattering of the display of his displays, he was selfish in the extreme, and I can hardly say that some of the members of the committee were uncomplainingly bitter of the way in which his interests were put in the background for the sake of the table of averages. This sort of thing, if carried on to a large extent, would pretty soon undermine the popularity of cricket, our reformers wish to do the game a real service by their command by tabooing play which makes for the professionalism and pander to the vanity of the individual at the expense of a side. As to whether the time has arrived for considering the advisability of widening the wicket or increasing the height of the stumps, I scarcely care to offer any decisive opinion. Our sumurers are not so settled as these other claims, and what would happen should we be visited by a wet season and three days' fixtures were fixed in a single day it is almost too dreadful to contemplate.

On the far-off days of my youth this used to be one of the cheeriest cricketers one could possibly hear on a cricket field after a slashing stroke by the big hitter of the side. Nowadays, however, it is a very seldom heard except in remote country districts where the thin white line, denoted by boundary is still unknown. When Mr. Dixon continues to complain of the easy boundaries of today, I can only think that his other than sympathetic. Now, I imagine, hear very little about a batsman hitting up 80 runs in an hour with his partner at the other crease, doing much the same if all the fours had to be run out, for the simple reason that the men of exceptional physique only would pretty soon be underlining the popularity of cricket, our reformers wish to do the game a real service by their command by tabooing play which makes for the professionalism and pander to the vanity of the individual at the expense of a side. As to whether the time has arrived for considering the advisability of widening the wicket or increasing the height of the stumps, I scarcely care to offer any decisive opinion. Our sumurers are not so settled as these other claims, and what would happen should we be visited by a wet season and three days' fixtures were fixed in a single day it is almost too dreadful to contemplate.

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For the life of me I cannot understand why there should be such a terrible fuss over the ruling of the Football League with regard to referee's decisions. So far as I can see, these at first strike one as being absolutely fair, and in order to strike one as being absolutely fair, and in order to be finished by playing an extra ten minutes, or so, both having been stopped through no fault of the contesting teams, does not smack of cut and run consistency. From what an outsider can judge the Appeals Committee would appear inclined to rule to proceed, but it may be hoped that before the next session comes round some specific rule will be passed making impossible such a state of affairs. Perhaps the Appeal Committee did not give too much scope for maneuvering over the disputes; the very existence of our League clubs depends upon straightforward, honorable dealing between our organizations and other. Let the suspicious once get abroad that the "Arrangement" has had a finger in the pie on many a score of grounds and the better class of football experts will soon get disgusted. The test matches gave a pretty good idea of possibilities in the way of friendliness, and those fixtures were abolished not a day too soon. Anything fanciful in the field can be tolerated now and again; a little unbinding may be acceptable in the interests of our League clubs, but we do not believe the slightest harm could be done if the game's umpires were given the power to penalize a half-man "out" who protracted the ball hitting the wicket with his legs, whether pitched straight or otherwise.

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THE BOND OF BLACK.

BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

AUTHOR OF "WHODUNNIT A WIFE,"
"THE DAY OF TEMPTATION," "IP
SINNERS ENTICE THEE,"
"THE GREAT WAR
IN ENGLAND,"
&c., &c.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE OLD "I" AND THE NEW.
I drew back expectant and waited.

Her eyes met mine, and she showed that she also had been upon me with favour.

"For years I have loved you, Muriel," I said in a calm tone as I could, "but I have feared to speak until to-day. Now that I have disclosed the truth cannot you trust me?"

"No," she replied, shaking her head dolorously.

"It is useless. I cannot tell you," I urged in a low voice, looking into her white agitated face.

"Yes, I have tried," she answered after a pause.

"And do you know?" I demanded quickly.

Without mutual confidences there can be no love between us," she responded in a diamantine.

"But why can you not trust me?" I urged.

I regret that you should have disclosed love to me, that's all," she answered, quite philosophically.

"Why? Is it such a very extraordinary proceeding?"

"Yes," she replied, thoughtfully. "You know well that marriage is entirely out of the question. What would your friends say if you married at such an age?"

"The opinion of my friends is nothing to me," I replied. "I am fortunately not dependent upon them. No, I feel sure that is not the reason of your answer. You have some secret reason. What is it, Muriel?"

"Hazel not directly told you that I am involved?"

"And you reciprocate this man's love?" I said harshly.

"She did not respond, but I saw in this silence an affirmative.

"Who is he?" I inquired quickly.

"A stranger."

"And you have confidence in him?"

Her eyes filled with tears, and her breast heaved and fell quickly.

"No, no," she cried at last. "Say no more. This must be painful to both of us. Do not let me distract you."

"But I love you," I again repeated. "I love you, Muriel!"

"Then forget me," she answered in a low, hoarse voice. "Forget me; for we can in future be only acquaintances—not friends."

"Then you have promised your lover to end your friendship with me. It is jealous of me?" I cried.

"Come, speak the truth," I urged.

"I have spoken the truth," she responded, in a voice rather calmer than before.

"And you discern my love?" I said, in tones of bitter reproach.

"Yes," she said, "it is true. I discern your love. You have spoken, and I give you my absolute trust. I trust you implicitly."

"But you do not respond?" I urged.

"What you expect that I love you, Muriel, better than all the world besides, that I will do all in my power to secure your happiness, that you shall be my sole thought night and day, will your heart not soften towards me? Will you never reflect that you treated me, your closest friend, a little unfairly?"

"I am to thank you, Muriel. I know, I know, that the picture of consolance," she answered, with a surging calmness.

"And this, then, is your decision?"

"Yes," she replied, in a blank, monotonous voice.

I am honoured by your offer, but am compelled to decline it."

Her words fell as a blow upon me. I had been contented from the first, but taken in the arrangement of my husband's quarters, and her eagerness always to please me, that she loved me. Yet her sudden, inexplicable desire to end our friendship shattered all my hopes. She loved another. It was my own fault, I told myself. I had neglected her too long, and it was but what I might have expected.

"Indeed, I have been a burden to you, I have been a hindrance to you, I have been a curse to you, I fear, I answered her shrewdly in monosyllables.

I was never tired of wandering through that historic, time-mellowed, old pile, where the sparrows twitter in the quiet court-yards, the peacock struts across the ancient gardens, and the crumbling sandal-arches the time, as they have done daily through the centuries.

"But I am not a burden to you," I said. "I am not a curse to you."

"I am to thank you, Muriel. I know, I know,

that you are a burden to me, but I am not a curse to you."

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